SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1903



T WAS the day before Christmas-an Oregon Christmas. It had rained mistily at dawn, but at 10 o'clock the clouds had parted and moved away reluctantly. There was a blue and dazzling sky overhead. The raindrops still sparkled on the wins dows and on the green grass, and the last roses and chrysanthenums hung their beautiful heads heavily beneath them; but there was to be no more rain. Oregon City's mighty barometer-the Falls of the Willamette-was declaring to her people by her softened roar that the morrow was to be fair.

Mrs. Orville Palmer was in the large kitchen making preparations for the Christmas dinner. She was a picture of dainty loveliness in a laver.der gingham dress, made with a full skirt and a shirred waist and big sleeves. A white apron was tied neatly around her waist. Her husband came in and paused to put his arm around her and kiss her. She was stirring something on the story holding her, dress aside with one thing on the stove, holding her dress aside with one

nand.
"It's goin' to be a fine Christmas, Emarine," he said, and sighed unconsciously. There was a wistful and careworn look on his face.
"Beautiful!" said Emarine, vivaciously. "Goin'

"Beautiful!" said Emarine, vivaclously. "Goin' downtown, Orvilie?"

"Yes. Want anything?"

"Why. the cramberries ain't come yet. I'm so uneasy about 'em. They'd ought to 'a' be'n stewed long ago. I like 'em cooked down an' strained to a jell. I don't see what ails them groc'rymen. Sh'u'd think they c'u'd get around some time before doomsday. Then I want—here, you'd best set it down."

She took a pencil and a slip of paper from a shelf over the table and gave them to him.

"Now, let me see." She commenced stirring again

over the table and gave them to him.

"Now, let me see." She commenced stirring again with two little wrinkles between her brows. "A hait a pound o' citron, a haif a pound o' candied peel, two pounds o' cur'nts, two pounds o' raisins—get 'em nuts or a monds—whichever's freshest; a pint o' Puget sound oysters for the dressin', an' a bunch o' celery. You stop by an' see about the turkey, Orville; an' I wish you'd run in 's you go by mother's an' tell her to come up as soon as she can. She'd ought to be here

Her husband smiled as he finished the list, "You're a wonderful housekeeper, Emarine," he said. Then his face grew grave, "Got a present for your mother yet,

Emarine?"

"Oh, yes, long ago. I got her a black shawl down t'
Charman's. She's b'en wantin' one."

He shuffled his feet about a little. "Uhhuh. You —that is—I reckon you ain't picked out any present fer—fer my mother, have you, Emarine?"

"No," she replied with cold distinctness; "I ain't." There was a silence. Emarine stirred briskly. The lines grew deeper between her brows, /Two red spots came into her cheeks. "I hope the rain ain't spoilt the chrysanthemums," she said then, with an air of ridherself of a disagreeable subject.

Orville made no answer. He moved his feet again uneasily. Presently he said: "I expect my mother needs a black shawl, too. Seemed to me hern looked kind o' rusty at church Sunday. Notice it, Emarine?"

No." said Emarine. "Seemed to me she was gittin' to look orful old. Emarine"—his voice broke; he came a step nearer—"it'll be the first Christmas dinner I ever eat without

She drew back and looked at him. He knew the look that flashed into her eyes, and shrank from it.
"You don't have to eat this'n' without her, Orville

"You don't have to eat this'n' without her, Orville Parmer! You go an' eat your dinner with your mother 'I you want! I can get along alone. Are you goin' to order them things? If you ain't, just say so, an' I'll go an' do 't myself!"

He put on his hat and went without a word.

Mrs. Palmer took the saucepan from the stove and set it on the hearth. Then she sat down and leaned her check in the palm of her hand, and looked steadily out the window. Her eyes held a far-sighted look. She saw a picture, but it was not the picture of the blue reaches of sky and the green yalley cleft by its silverreaches of sky and the green valley cleft by its silver-blue river. She saw a kitchen, shabby compared to her own, scantily furnished, and in it an old white-haired woman sitting down to eat her Christmas din-ner alone. After a while she arose with an impatient

"Well, I can't help it!" she exclaimed. "If I knuck-led down to her this time, I'd have to do 't ag'in. She might just as well get ust to 't first as last. I wish she hadn't got to lookin' so old an pitiful, though, a-

settin' there in front o' us in church Sunday after Sunday. The cords stand out in her neck like well rope, an' her chin keeps a-quiv'rin' so! I can see Orville a-watchin' her—"

The door opened suddenly, and her mother entered. She was bristling with curiosity.
"Say, Emarine!" She lowered her voice, although there was no one to hear. "Where d' you s'pose the undertaker's a-goin' up by here? Have you heard of

No," said Emarine. "Did Orville stop by an' tell

you to hurry up?"
"Yes. What's the matter of him? Is he sick?"
"Not as I know of, Why?"

H Point of Knucklin' Down

By Ella Higginson.

"He looks so. Oh, I wonder if it's one o' the Peterson children where the undertaker's a-goin'! They've all got the quinsy sore throat."
"How does he look? I don't see 's he looks so turra-

"Why, Emarine Parmer! Ev'rybody in town says he looks so! I only hope they don't know what ails

him!"
"What does all him?" cried out Emarine, fiercely.
"What are you hintin' at?"
"Well, if you don't know what alls him, you'd ought to: so I'll tell you. He's dyin' by Inches ever sence you turned his mother out o' doors."
Emarine turned pale. Sheet lightning played in her eyes.

'Oh, you'd ought to talk about my turnin' her out!'

"Oh, you'd ought to talk about my turnin' her out!" she burst out, furiously. "After you a-settin' here aquar'In with her in this very kitchen, an' eggin' me on! Wa'n't she goin' to turn you out of your own daughter's home? Wa'n't that what I turned her out fer? I didn't turn her out, anyhow! I only told Oryville this house wa'n't big enough fer his mother an' me, an' that neither o' us 'u'd knuckle down' so he'd best take his choice. You'd ought to talk!"

"Well, if I egged you on, I'm sorry fer 't," said Mrs. Endey, solemnly. "Ever sence that fit o' sickness I had a month ago, I've felt kind o' old an' no-account myself, as if I'd like to let all holts go an' jest rest. I don't spunk up like I ust to. No, he didn't go to Peterson's-he's gawn right on. My land! I wonder 'f it ain't old Gran'ma Ellot; she had a bad spell—no, he didn't turn that corner. I can't think where he's go-in' to!"

She sat down with a sign of defeat.

A smile gleamed palely across Emarine's face, and was gone. "Maybe if you'd go up in the attic you could see better," she suggested, dryly.

"Oh, Emarine, here comes old Gran'ma Eliot herself! Run an' open the door fer her. She's limpin' worse 'n usual."

Emarine flew to the door. Grandma Eliot was one of the few people she loved. She was large and motherly. She wore a black dress and shawl and a funny bonnet with a frill of white lace around her brow. Emarine's face softened when she kissed her. "I'm so glad to see you," she said, and her voice was tender. Even Mrs. Endey's face underwent a change. Usual-

ly it wore a look of doubt, if not of positive suspicion, but now it fairly beamed. She shook hands cordially with the guest and led her to a comfortable chair. "I know your rheumatiz is worse," she said cheerfully, "because you're limpin' so. Oh, did you see the undertaker go up by heer? We can't think where he's

undertaker go up by heer? We can't think where he's goln'. D' you happen to know?"

"No, I don't, an' I don't want to, neither," Mrs. Eliot laughed comfortably. "Mis' Endey, you don't ketch me 'foolin' with undertakers till I have to." She sat down, and removed her black cotton gloves. "I'm gettin' to that age when I don't care much where undertakers go to so long's they let me alone. Fixin' fer Christmas. Engriné, dear?"

takers go to so long's they let me alone. Fixin' fer Christmas, Emarine, dear?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Emarine in her very gentlest tone. Her mother had never said "dear" to her, and the sound of it on this old lady's lips was sweet.

"Won't you come an' take dinner with us?"

The old lady laughed merrily. "Oh, dearie me, dearie me! You don't guess my son's folks could spare me now, do you? I spend ev'ry Christmas there. My son's wife, Sidonie, she nearly runs her feet off waitin' on me. She can't do enough fer me. My! Mrs. Endey, you don't know what a comfort a daughter-in-law is when you get old an' feeble!"

Emarine's face turned red. She went to the table and stood with her back to the older women; but her mother's sharp eyes observed that her ears grew

mother's sharp eyes observed that her ears grew

An' I never will," said Mrs. Endey, grimly. "You've got a son-in-law, though, who's worth a whole townful of most sons-in-law. He was such a good son, too. Jest worshipped his mother; couldn't bear her out o' his sight. He lumored her high and low. That's jest the way Sidome does with me. I'm gettin' cranky's I get older, an' sometimes I'm reel cross an' sassy to her; but she jest laf's at me an' then comes an' kisses me an' I'm all right again. It's a

The knife in Emarine's hand slipped, and she uted a little cry.
"Hurt you?" demanded her mother, sternly.

Emarine was silent, and did not turn.
"Cut you, Emarine? Why, don't you answer me?
Aigh?"

A little, said Emarine. She went into the pantry and presently returned with a narrow strip of muslin, which she wound around her finger.

"Well, I never see! You never will learn any gumption. Why don't you look what you're about. Now go around Christmas with your finger all tied up."

"Oh, that'll be all right by tomorrow," said Mrs. Eliot, cheerfully. "Won't it, Emarine? Never cry over will have being a bedy got will be a light of the said wil spilt milk, Mrs. Endey; it makes a body get wrinkles too fast. O' course, Orville's mother's comin' to take dinner with you. Emarine:

"Dear me!" exclaimed Emarine, in a sudden flutter.
"I don't see why them cranberries don't come. I told
Orville to hurry 'em up. I'd best make the floatin'
island while I wait."

"I stopped at Orville's mother's as I came along, 'How?" Emarine turned in a startled way from

'I say I stopped at Orville's mother's as I came

"She well?" asked Mrs. Endey.
"No, she ain't. Shakin' like she had the St. Vitus
nce. She's failed horribly lately. She'd be'n crying.
er eyes was all swelled up."
"There was all swelled up." Then Mrs. Endey said:

There was quite a silence. Then Mrs. Endey said: "What's she be'n cryin' about?"
"Why, when I asked her she jest laffed kind of plifful, an' said: 'Oh, only my tomfoolishness, o' couse. She said she always got to thinkin' about other Christmases. But I cheered her up. I told her what a good time I always had at my son's, an' how Sidonle jest couldn't do enough for me. An' I told her to think what a nice time she'd have 't Emarine's to-

Mrs. Endey smiled. "What she say to that?" Mrs. Endey smiled. "What she say to that?"

"She didn't say much. I could see she was thankful, though, she had a son's to go to. She said she pitied all poor wretches that had to set out their Christmas alone. Poor old lady, she ain't got much spunk left. She's all broke down. But I cheered her up some. Sech a wishful look took holt o' her when I pictchered her dinner over here at Emarine's. I can't seem to forget it. Goodness, I must go. I'm on my way to Sidonie's, an' she'll be comin' after me if I ain't on time."

When Mrs. Eliot had gone limping down the path Mrs. Endey said: "You got your front room red up,

Mrs. Endey said: "You got your front room red up,

: I ain't had time to red up anything." "Well, I'll do it. Where's your duster at?" "Behind the org'n. You can get out the wax cross again. Mis' Dillon was here with all her childern an' I had to hide up ev'rything. I never see childern like hern. She lets 'em handle things so!"

like hern. She lets 'em handle things so!"

Mrs. Endey went into the "front room," and began to dust the organ. She was something of a diplomat, and she wished to be alone for a few minutes. "You have to manage Emarine by contrairies," she reflected. It did not occur to her that this was a family trait. "I'm orful sorry I ever egged her on to turnin' Orville's mother out o' doors, but who'd 'a' thought it 'u'd break her down so? She ain't told a soul, either. I reckoned she'd talk somethin' orful about us, but she ain't told a soul. She's kep' a stiff upper lip, an' told folks she al'ays expected to live alone when Orville got married. Emarine's all worked up. I believe the Lord hisself must 'a' sent Gran'ma Elliot here to talk like an angel unawares. I bet she'd go an' ask Mis' Parmer over here to dinner if she wa'n't afraid I'd laff at her fer knucklin' down. I'll have to aggravate her."

She finished dusting and returned to the kitchen. "I wonder what Gran'ma Eliot 'u'd say if she knew you'd turned Orville's mother out, Emarine?"

There was no reply. Emarine was at the table making tarts. Her back was to her mother.

"I didn't mean what I said about bein' sorry I egged you on. Emarine. I'm glad you turned her out. She'd ort to be turned out."

Emarine dropped a quivering ruby of jelly into a golden ring of pastry and laid it carefully on a plate.

"Gran'ma Eliot can go talkin' about her daughter-in-law Sidonie all she wants, Emarine. You keep a

stiff upper lip."
"I can 'tend to my own affairs," said Emarine

"Well, don't flare up so. Here comes Orville. Land, but he does look peakid!"

After supper, when her mother had gone home for the night, Emarine put on her hat and shawl. Her husband was sitting by the fireplace looking thoughtfully at the bed of coals.
"I'm goin' out," she said briefly. "You keep the

"Why Emarine, it's dark! Don't you want I sh'u'd

"No; you keep the fire up."
He looked at her anxiously, but he knew from the way she set her heels down that remonstrance would "Don't stay long," he said in a tone of habitual

He loved her passionately, in spite of the lasting hurt she had given him when she parted him from his mother. It was a hurt that had sunk deeper than his mother. It was a hurt that had sunk deeper than even he realized. It lay heavy on his heart day and night. It took the blue out of the sky and the green out of the grass and the gold out of the sunlight. It took the exaltation and the rapture out of his tenderest moments of love. He never reproached her; he never really blamed her; certainly he never pitted himself. But he carried a heavy heart around with him and his few smiles were joyless things.

For the trouble he blamed only himself. He had promised Emarine solemnly before he married her that if there were any "knuckling down" to be done, his

if there were any "knuckling down" to be done, his mother should be the one to do it. He had made the promise deliberately, and he could no more have broken it than he could have changed the color of

his eyes. When bitter feeling arises between two relatives by marriage, it is the one who stands between them—the one who is bound by the tenderest ties to both—who has the real suffering to bear, who is torn and tortured until life holds nothing worth the having. Orville Palmer was the one who stood between. He

it without a word.

- Emarine hurried through the early winter dark un-

There was a dim light in the kitchen; the curtains had not been drawn. Emarine paused and looked in. The sash was lifted six inches, for the night was warm, and the sound of voices came to her at once,

warm, and the sound of voices came to her at once, Mrs. Palmer had company.

"It's Miss Presly," said Emarine, resentfully, under her breath. "Old gossip!"

"—goin' to have a fine dinner, I hear," Miss Precly was saying. "Turkey with oyster dressin', an' cranberries, an' mince an' punkin pie, an' reel plum puddin' with brandy poured over it an' set afire, an' wine dip an' nuts and raisins, an' wine itself to wind up on. Emarine's a fine cook. She knows how to git up a dinner that makes your mouth water to think about. You goin' to have a spread, Mis' Parmer?"

"Not much of a one," said Orville's mother. "I expected to, but I c'u'dn't git them fall potatoes sold off. I'll have to keep 'em till spring to git any kind o' price. I don't care much about Christmas, though." Her chin was trembling, but she lifted it high. "It's silly for anybody but children to build so much on Christmas."

Emarine opened the door and walked in. Mrs. Palmer arose slowly, grasping the back of her chair.

"Orville's dead!" she said solemnly.

Emarine laughed, but there was the tenderness of near tears in her voice.

"Oh, my, no!" she said, sitting down. "I run over the sak you to come to Christmas dinner. I was too

"Oh, my, no!" she said, sitting down. "I run over to ask you to come to Christmas dinner. I was too busy all day to come sooner. I'm goin' to have a great dinner, an' I've cooked ev'ry single thing of it myself! I want to show you what a fine Christmas dinner your daughter-in-law can get up. Dinner's at 2, an', I want you to come at 11. Will you?"

Mrs. Palmer had sat down weakly. Trembling was not the word to describe the feeling that had taken possession of her. She was shivering. She wanted to fall down on her knees and put her arms around her son's wife and sob out all her loneliness and heartache. But life is a stage, and 'Miss Presly was an audience not to be ignored. So Mrs. Palmer said:

"Well, I'll be reel glad to come, Emarine, It's offul kind o' you to think of 't. It'u'd 'a' be'n lonesome eatin' here all by myself, I expect."

Emarine stood up. Her heart was like a thistledown. Her eyes were shining.

"All right," she said; "an' I want that you sh'u'd come just at 11. I must run right back now. Good night."

"Well, I declare!" said Miss Presly. "That girl

"Well, I declare!" said Miss Presly. "That girl gits prettier ev'ry day o' her life. Why, she just looked full o' glame tonight!"

Orville was not at home when his mother arrived in her rusty best dress and shawl. Mrs. Endey saw her coming. She gasped out:

"Why, good grieve! Here's Mis' Parmer, Emarine!"

"Yes, I know," said Emarine, calmly. "I ast her to dinner."

She opened the door and shook hands with her

She opened the door and shook hands with her mother-in-law, giving her mother a look of defiance that almost upset that lady's gravity.

"You set right down, Mother Parmer, an' let me take your things. Orville don't know you're comin', an' I just want to see his face when he comes in. Here's a new black shawl for your Christmas. I got mother one just like it. See what nice long fringe it's got. Oh, my! Don't go to cryin'! Here comes Orville."

She stepped aside quickly. When her husband entered his eyes fell instantly on his mother, weeping childishly over a new shawl. She was in the old splint

rocking chair with the high back.
"Mother!" he cried. Then he gave a frightened, tortured glance at his wife. Emarine smiled at him, but it was through tears.
"Emarine ast me, Orville—she ast me to dinner o'

An' she give me this shawl. I'm-cryin'-

fer—joy."
"I ast her to dinner," said Emarine, "but she ain't ever goin' back again. She's goin' to stay. I expect we've both had enough of a lesson to do us."
Orville did not speak. He fell on his knees and laid his head, like a boy, in his mother's lap and reached one strong but trembling arm up to his wife's waist, drawing her down to him.

Mrs. Endey got up and went to rattling things.

drawing her down to him.

Mrs. Endey got up and went to rattling things around on the table vigorously.

"Well, I never see such a pack o' loonaticks!" she exclaimed. "Go an' burn all your Christmas dinner up, if I don't look after it! Turncoats! I expect they'll both be fallin' over theirselves to knuckle down to each other from now on! I never see!"

But there was something in her eyes, too, that made

them beautiful.
—Copyright, 1903, by McClure, Phillips & Co.

ON PRE-SENTIMENTS

THE GENIAL IDIOT.

By John Kendrick Bangs

R. IDIOT," said Mr. Pedagog, the other morning, as the guests gathered at the breakfast table, "do you believe in pre-

"It all depends upon the presentiment," replied the Idiot. Sometimes I believe they are the instinctive prophecies of a nature peculiarly receptive to exterior impressions. Sometimes I think they are mere fakes, When a girl falls upstairs and immediately has a presentiment that she won't be married that year, in nine cases out of ten it isn't so much superstition that impels her to that belief as a sad realization that she hasn't any man in her grip, and there isn't anything in it. If a man is up in a balloon 10,000 feet above the earth and the thing bursts, and he has a presentiment on his way back that something is going to happen to him when he lands, I'm inclined to think there is something in it. And so it goes. There are presentiments and presentiments. Do you happen to be suf-. Fering from anything of the sort this morning?"

"In a way, yes," said Mr. Pedagog, with a slight "In a way, yes," said Mr. Pedagog, with a slight shiver. "For several days now—in fact ever since Thanksgiving, I have been much worried by a vague apprehension that something is going to happen to me. I don't know precisely what the thing is, but somehow or other when I'm walking in the street there is a persistent feeling inside of me that a sign is going to be blown off a building and drop on my head, or something of that sort."

"Mercy," cried the idiot. "Really? Well, you want to get rid of it right away, Mr. Pedagog, for it is one of the most dangerous presentiments a man can have."

have." is likely to come true, then?" enquired the

schoolmaster, anxiously.
"No, indeed," said the Idiot. "That's the queer "No, indeed, said the idiot. That's the queer thing about that special presentiment. It never comes true itself, but in spite of that it is a most perilous apprehension in its general effect upon the victim. I had a friend once who suffered from it, and the things he went through because of it were enough to kill any ordinary man. Fortunately he was constitutionally a giant and he survived, but until he got the present-

a giant and he survived, but until he got the presentiment under control, his life wasn't worth five minutes purchase."

"You interest me hugely." said Mr. Pedagog, uneasily. "Would you mind outlining your friend's case
for my benefit?"

"Certainly not," said the Idiot. "Only too glad
to because it may help your of your provided and

"Certainly not," said the Idiot, "Only too glad to because it may help you of your own predicament. The chap's name was Swallerbox. He was a New Englander by birth and came of mighty sturdy stock. When he was in college he played center on the 'varsity eleven, and rowed number three in the crew. I tell you that to give you some idea of his physique, and to explain how in spits of all that happened to him he survives to this day. After taking his bachelor's degree he became a book agent and sold The

for two years, after which he came to New York and became a member of the Curb exchange on Wall street. Everything went well with him until three years ago, when he was suddenly selzed with this awful feeling that on his way to business some mornawful feeling that on his way to business some morning a sign would be blown off a building, would fall on his head and knock him out. Try as he would he couldn't rid himself of that apprehension, and when he went to bed at night he was almost afraid to go to sleep, for the obsession was so strong he dreamed the thing was happening all the time. Tommy Wiggins, one of his class-mates, roomed with him at that time and he told me it was awful the way Swaller. time, and he told me it was awful the way Swaller-box yelled in his sleep and jumped out of bed at all hours of the night to escape the signs he thought were falling on him."

were falling on him."

"Your description is terribly graphic," cried Mr. Pedagog, breathlessly. "I have all those symptoms. Only last night, while asleep on the divan in my den, to get away from a great gilded sign bearing the legebd 'Minzesheibmer & Jones, Undertakers,' that I thought was falling upon me, I leaped from the couch and landed sprawling upon my work table, upsetting the ink and mucilage pots upon a series of mathematical drawings it had taken me two weeks to make."

"That's sure proof that you've got a bad case of it," said the Idiot. "And I'm sure the story of Swallerbox's experience will profit you. He got so he didn't dare walk on the sidewalk, taking, instead, the middle of the street. Well—you know what that means. The first thing that Swallerbox knew he was knocked out by a trolley car, and enjoyed a period of three weeks in the hospital. While looking for fiying signs he had forgotten all about the flying Juggernaut, with the result that when everything was cleaned up he was minus two toes and had a dent in gernaut, with the result that when everything was cleaned up he was minus two toes and had a dent in the back of his head big enough to hold a walnut. Of course, he made money by the episode, because the railroad people paid him \$2.500 for his toes, and allowed him \$500 extra for the dent, and he drew \$50 a week from the Accident Insurance companies for the time he was laid up. but, as he put it afterwards, money isn't everything. He told me he'd rather live in the lap of woe for a year than limp about for a minute with a pocket full of money and no toes to speak of. Swallerbox had been a divine dancer, you know, and the loss of his toes gave him a lurch that spoiled him for the two-step, and it made him sensitive. The him for the two-step, and it made him sensitive. The Boston Dip is the only dance I can do, he wailed, 'and that has gone out everywhere except in Boston, and I don't know enough to live there'."

I cannot sympathize with an empty mind," said

"I cannot sympathize with an empty mind," said the Bibliomaniac, who had never danced.

"Nobedy asked you to," said the Idiot. "It's the empty shoe we're talking about. But Swallerbox learned his lesson. Presentiment or no presentiment, there he was. The pedestrian must walk on the sidewalk, whatever his premonitions, or take the consequences. It hadn't been rammed home to Swallerbox that the sidewalks belonged to walkers and the streets to the trolley companies until he had had the argumentum ad hominem presented to him with a home.

his presentiment remained with him, he walked like a sensible man upon the sidewalk."

"I'm glad to hear you say that," said Mr. Pedagog.
"I always do that, for, unlike your friend, Mr. Swal-THE NEW OLD MOTHER HUBBARD.

breaking force. So after he left the hospital, although

Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard, To fetch her poor dog a bone, But when she got there the cupboard (only contained remnants of cold Shredded Cheapa Vita Break-fast Food, Olive Oil and Peanuts),

And so the poor dog had none. She went to the baker's to buy him some (whole-meal) bread. But when she came back (it is unnecessary to state after the preceding verse that)

The poor dog lay dead.

(Her next door neighbor, a Christian Scientist, having heard her unnecessary lamentation, in the meantime had come in, and, seeing the poor animal prone on the floor, had read extracts to him from Mrs. Eddy's latest book on the influence of mind over matter, with the natural result that) sult that)

When she came back, The dog was a-laughin'.

She went to the barber's to buy him a wig,
But when she came back he, having picked up a
copy of "The Cult of Beauty," had found that
by massaging the muscles of the scalp of your head for twenty minutes every two hours and a half, you will produce, not only a smile, but hair that won't come off, in the exuberance of

his joy) Was dancing a jig.

The dame made a courtesy.

The dog made a bow; dame said, "Your servant" (a term which this faithful friend of man, being a member of several trade unions, took exception to as an obsolete term, so, after taking a brief resume of lete term, so, after taking a brief resume of his principles and convictions, and having dwelt on the fact that, though he had devoted all the hours of his day which were not claimed by his rest cure to a develop-your-muscle-eat-less-beauty-for-us-all-strenuous-life, he had been, still was, and always would be a plain, good-hearted-streetcar-riding-common-or-garden dog, and could never hope to be the editor of a ladies' paper, or an advertisement for any one's complexion soap, with a sigh of profound relief and happy resignation),

The dog said: "Bow-wow." —Life.

lerbox, I have never yielded to my fears sufficiently to try to escape them through greater dangers."

to try to escape them through greater dangers."

"Good," said the Idiot. "Your case is not so extreme as was that of Swallerbox, which is a point in your favor. Well, Swallerbox came back to the sidewalk. Experience had taught him that a premonition was one thing, but that the conscious seeking of danger was another. As between signs and trolley cars, he had learned that the latter had been proved by human experience to be inevitably the more dangerous, whatever his nervous system prompted him to avoid. But now whenever he espied a sign he kept his eye on it. If it seemed rickety, he turned aside to avoid it, but his caution proved his downfall. One morning he left his apartment up town to go to his office on the street, and his premonition was so strongly upon him that he made up his mind the thing he most feared was due to happen that very day. "Tomost feared was due to happen that very day. 'To-day is the appointed hour,' he muttered to himself as he left his home. 'No matter by what means I seek my office, the sign will fall.' He went so far that morning as to make his will, in which he left his debts to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and whatever was left to his room-mate. Wiggins, and then he set out."' then he set out-

"And no sign fell upon him all the way down." in-terrupted the Bibliomaniac. "I know the kind of story you're going to tell."

you're going to tell."

"No, you don't," said the Idiot. "It is true that no sign fell from the beginning to the end of his walk, but what did happen was that while keeping his eye peeled for loose signs, he overlooked a great yawning coal hole beneath his feet. The result was that Swallerbox fell through the chute into a bin below the sidewalk, just in time to receive a couple of tons of pea coal, which was in process of delivery as he disappeared, in the small of his back. It took one hour for him to get out, for in spite of his yells for help, nobody was aware of his presence below until the janitor came to see if the bins were full. Meanwhile Swallerbox had had about eight more tons of granujanitor came to see if the bins were full. Meanwhile Swallerbox had had about eight more tons of granulated anthracite poured over him, and when discovered was the living picture of a badly used up stoker of African descent. I don't believe he has got the coal dust out of his system yet. So you see, Mr. Pedagog, that that presentiment, while the thing itself may never come true, for what it involves along other lines is one of the most dangerous in existence."

"And was Swallerbox ever cured of his nervous apprehension?" asked Mr. Pedageg.

apprehension?" asked Mr. Pedagog.

"No." said the Idiot. "But he's got it under control. Finding himself unable to get rid of it, he determined to make the best of it, and now it has become one of the great pleasures of his life. He goes about seeking signs to fall an him. When he heard that the windiest corner in New York was down by the Flation building, he deliberately went down there and stood until he saw there were no signs on the block to blow on him. Then, disappointed, he went across to the other side of Broadway, or Fifth avenue, and whenever a sign really was blown off a building he would try to get under it, but without success. The nearest he came to being hit was when massed nearest he came to being hit was when and nassed

within three feet of him one day last March. He butted it with his head as it came down, but he didn't consider that that counts as a fulfillment, because it was he and not the sign that did the business. Lately he has taken up sign-chasing just as a good many people go in for golf or fox hunting. Whenever he has a holiday he starts out early in the morning looking

a holiday he starts out early in the holiday he starts out early in the holiday for one to fall on him."

"He must be crazy," ejaculated Mr. Brief.

"No—he enjoys the sport of it just as Mr. Bib here enjoys the chase for a rare first edition of the New York city directory, or some other choice bit of literary property," said the Idiot.

"But there is no physical danger in book hunting." alleged the Bibliomaniac. "I should be a fool to endanger my head for the sake of my fad."

"Swallerbox has arranged all that," said the Idiot. "Swallerbox has arranged all that," said the Idiot.
"He is prepared for any emergency. In the first
place, he has practised being hit by a sign in his room.
He has a huge board suspended from the ceiling by a
length of clothes line. By touching a spring the board
is made to fall, and, by long practice, Swallerbox has
got so that he can catch it on his shoulders, on the
back of his neck, or on the crown of his head, without hurting himself a bit. You see he has made a game of it and has become not only an expert, but a real enthusiast on the subject.'

"Bosh," said the Lawyer. "Some day when a real sign falls on him all his science won't save his cra-nium. One good crack will give him his quietus, how-ever expert he may be."

"Nope-you're wrong," said the Idiot. "For he is "We see what you are coming to, Mr. Pedagog." laughed the doctor, "if you follow the Swallerbox

'I should not choose it, I must say." smiled the

schoolmaster. "if there were an alternative."

"There is," said the doctor. "A little less pumpkin pie and a little more pepsin will cure you of any presentiment you may have. These numerous apprehensions and terrible dreams are the result of bad digestion. You don't need to go sign chasing, but to take better care of your stomach."

There was a pause for a moment, and the Idiot

There was a pause for a moment, and the idiot rose to leave.

"Say, doctor," he said, as he reached the door. "I wish you'd give me one of those pepsin prescriptions for nervous presentiment. I have a terrible one of my own this morning, and I want it cured."

"Well, I don't know whether one of your hallucinations will respond to normal treatment," said the doctor. "What is your presentiment?"

"That on the first of the month I'll find my letter box full of bills," said the Idiot. "It keeps me awake nights."

box full of ones, sate the lights."

"That," replied the doctor, "is beyond the reach of pepsin. I've tried it myself and I know. There is but one remedy for that, Mr. Idiot."

"What is that?" asked the latter,

"The gold cure," said the doctor. "And even that is not permanent."